【 story 】 # DigitalCircus_morph.mod

【 length 】 ~8150 words / 26 pages / illustrated story

【 content 】 The Amazing Digital Circus, Pomni POV, focus on character & lore accuracy, sfw, fpreg, background story (implied), dubious/rapid/cryptic/unwanted pregnancy, angst, psychological torture, fun & games, hurt & comfort & healing, implied shipping, Jax being a dick, Gangle being a dick, drama, parody, investigation, transformation, feminization and everyone is kinda queer

【 spice lvl 】 [▰▱▱▱▱▱▱▱▱▱]

【 emotion lvl 】 [▰▰▰▰▰▰▰▰▰▱]

【 summary 】 After another adventure, there are consequences… Everyone changes, but Pomni is struggling the most.

【 preview 】 “Did Jax just hit a pregnant woman?” Zooble commented in disbelief.

【 commentary 】 I discussed with my partner if I’d be able to actually write good TADC pregnancy content while it still feeling true to the show. I thought it wasn’t possible, but I just gave it a try anyway. It didn’t turn out spicy at all (it just didn’t work out), but interestingly, it took a very different turn. This plays after episode 6!

Illustrations are all made by my partner SapphicBump.
The Amazing Digital Circus & all characters © Gooseworx

DigitalCircus_morph.mod

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What a stupid adventure, once again. How else could it have been, when it's one of Caine's *own* creations? At least this time everyone did participate, so they all shared the same kind of trauma, in a way. All things considered, that was kind of … well, not really nice, but interpersonal glue. Together-welding.

And at least it wasn't anything horror or sport. Just a board game-like experience, like Mario Party, but without any rules or sense. Just stupid stuff, like massive boulders chasing them, finding needles in haystacks, and doing taxes as quickly as possible. And in the end, there wasn't even a winner! Even though Pomni was the first at the finish line! Because "*they were all winners*". And they all got prizes. Not even good ones. Just empty boxes filled with nothing but the scent of disappointment, and with a whacky picture drawn on the inside of the cover.

For Pomni, it was some kind of bird.

That was all. Adventure over. "*Goodnight my little Dipping Dots, see you tomorrow*". Nothing more, nothing less.

And now was tomorrow—or at least what Pomni perceived as tomorrow, after she had faux slept for an unknown amount of time. And there was something strange. Something different.

Her body felt different.

Well—it wasn't really her body, she reminded herself. It was her *avatar*; it had nothing to do with her per se. However, spending so much time in this cursed virtual world, always using the same representation, began to create a phantom connection between her and her avatar. She had heard about the idea of this in the past, from frequent headset users, especially those who used VR to socialize, that their senses actually started to follow up on what the brain thinks it receives—like tactile sensations, but also smells or pain.

And now that Pomni was stuck here and wanted this to be anything but the truth, she could absolutely understand that theory, and had to fight hard to not see this avatar as her actual body.

And not see this newfound curve on her lower abdomen as… weirdly uncanny and intrusive to her bodily personal space.

"What the…" she whispered to herself while stroking over the curve. She couldn't glitch inside, so the hit box must have adjusted to the new shape. It also wasn't that visible, but it was enough to throw Pomni off.
She would have to ask Caine about it once she saw him again.

She was willing to go with most of his overstepping s[redacted]t, even when he gave her new skins without consent, but changing her daily avatar without asking or warning just felt like… too much. It made her feel powerless. Well, powerless-er. Couldn't he let her just have one thing that was completely her own?

As per usual after getting up, Pomni decided to go to what everyone called '*the lounge*', which was nothing but a part of the big circus hall with more seating options than usual.

Kinger was already there, reading a book without any title or print, with a steaming hot low-poly cup of coffee in front of him on the table.

As she got closer, Pomni felt confused for a moment—had Kinger always been… this big? Or was she misremembering things?

"Morning, Pomni, I hope you have a great yolking today!" He greeted her without looking up.

"A great wh-- … you know what? Thank you. I hope you do, too," Pomni answered while sitting down next to him. When she looked over his shoulder, she saw that the book he was reading was written in Wingdings.

"Good morning, guys! Hope you had a good rest!" Ragatha's voice resounded behind Pomni. She turned around, wanting to greet the ragdolled human with a smile, but something about her was off; just as with Kinger. Ragatha seemed… less raggedy, somehow? Could that be possible?

Pomni tried to pinpoint exactly what seemed different, but she wasn't able to.

"T-thanks, it was … alright…" She answered tentatively.

"At least that's one of us!" Ragatha answered and let herself fall onto the couch next to Pomni, "I had the strangest dreams, I swear."

Pomni couldn't help but stare at her.

Ragatha somehow looked… How could she put it…? More attractive?

“Love that for you, Ragatha,” Kinger answered and took a sip of his coffee. When Pomni looked at him, he definitely seemed somehow bigger.

Ragatha apparently thought the same way, because she said, “Kinger… have you always been this tall?”

“Oh no, of course not!” he answered, easing the strange feeling in Pomni's chest for a moment before reigniting it by continuing, “I used to be very tiny as a baby!”

“Kinger, that’s not…” Ragatha began, but paused herself. Pomni could see that she was, too, doubting her memory.

“What are you losers up to?” Jax interrupted their conversation.

Pomni didn’t plan to answer him, to continue to keep her distance from him, but when she saw him, she was hit with the same strange feeling she had with the others; he was different. How, she couldn’t say, but also, like Ragatha, somehow… more attractive.

“Okay, wait, no, everyone stop—” she announced in an alarmed voice and got up from the couch. “Something is going on.”

Jax turned his head towards her and looked at her, and she thought she could see mild confusion in his gaze, at least for a moment. Then he looked at the others and affirmed Pomni’s skepticism by saying, “What the f[redacted]k is wrong with all of you?”

“That’s what I am trying to find out,” Pomni answered nervously.

“You look different,” he said in such a strange tone while looking her up and down, as if she were somehow offending him with her presence.

“You do, too,” she gave back, then looking at the others, “and so do you.”

In the meantime, Gangle and Zooble approached them, too. They did not greet them, however, instead looking curiously at what all the commotion was about. Gangle looked normal at first sight, but there was something weird about Zooble, too.

“I had the same feeling… I also felt… I don’t know, kind of strange when I woke up today?” Ragatha answered.

“Me, too.” Pomni agreed.

“Me three! But I always feel kind of strange when I wake up,” Kinger added.

ROSE VIRAGE

“I haven’t...” Gangle finally said instead of greeting them.

“But I have,” Zooble added, stepping closer. They seemed... maybe... bulkier?

“What the hell is going on?” Jax rephrased his question from before. “What in God’s name is happening to all of you weirdos?”

“You called?” A voice resounded behind Jax, making him jump and scream in a delicate, borderline girly manner.

It was Caine.

Who had just been summoned by the word “*God*”.

This was very concerning. More than usual.
But not the point right now.

“What are you doing to us, Caine? What’s happening?”, Zooble grouched at him.

“Me? Moi? I? Oh no, my dearest Zooble, I have done absolutely nothing to you! Today.”

Pomni began to nervously massage her fingers. “Today?”

“Today.”

“Stop talking like a f[redacted]g whimsical little s[redacted]t, Caine, and give us a straight answer!” Zooble pushed further.

Caine’s assembly of human facial organs took on a displeased, frustrated look. “I did! I haven’t done anything to you. Today.”

“Okay, Mr. Genie in a bottle, and what about yesterday?” Jax added.

“‘Why, ‘twas nothing but another great adventure!” Caine rejoiced.

“I really don’t like this riddle talk...” Ragatha said more to herself than to the group.

“Okay, but—” Pomni began, but was interrupted by Caine, “Which is still going on!”

Silence.
Then loud, collective sounds and words of confusion and objection from the others.

“W-what is your guys’ problem? What’s the big issue? I’m just trying to spice things up a little! Thinking outside the box! Who said adventures should be a once-a-day experience?”

ROSE VIRAGE

Everyone answered him, but ultimately Gangle's voice was the loudest. “CAINE you fucking CUNT, just TELL US what you did to us!”

Everyone hushed and looked at Gangle, who still panted in anger. She was still wearing her sad mask, which was rather unusual for that time of the day, but she looked angry.

“Did... h-how was Gangle not censored—”, Pomni began, confused.

“W-well,” Caine said, obviously failing to regain countenance, too, “That’s part of the adventure and for you to figure out! You will find the solution somewhere here in this circus. Also, it was Bubble’s idea, goodbye.”

With that, he disappeared into nothing, leaving a confused Bubble in his stead.

As everyone looked at Bubble, he decided to leave this uncomfortable situation and just popped.

“Measly coward!” Gangle yelled, took Kinger’s coffee asset, threw it in the air at the rough position where Bubble had been, and grunted and huffed in anger.

“W-wow, okay,” Zooble said and gently touched Gangle on her shoulder. “Let’s take it down a notch, okay...?”

“Yeah, I mean... now we know that there’s nothing truly wrong with us, and that we’re just... like... still in an adventure,” Ragatha commented helpfully.

Again, Pomni couldn’t help but find her really pretty.

She shook her head, trying to focus on the issue at hand again. “Okay, let’s... let’s think about what this all could mean.”

“You have fun with that, you lost causes. I’m out,” Jax said and turned around on one leg to swiftly walk away.

Nobody objected, but there was something nice about the way he walked.

Pomni shook her head again, embarrassed for this thought.

“Maybe it has something to do with the boxes we got yesterday?” Ragatha suggested.

“Yeah, what was the deal with those?” Zooble added.

“They were mods,” Kinger stated, almost bored, making everyone look at him. “I-I thought that was clear?”

ROSE VIRAGE

“What does that mean, man? Speak up!” Gangle pushed him further, in her new uncanny way, making Kinger flinch.

“Do you guys not know what mods are…?” he asked, confused.

“No, no we know, but what kind of mods were they?” Ragatha specified.

“Oh, that! Of course. That I don’t know.”

Gangle moaned. Aggressively.

“No, no, that’s already very helpful. Mine had a picture on its lid… Yours, too, right? Do you remember what it was?” Pomni said.

“Uh… I think it was a cow or something?” Zooble answered.

“A gorilla.” Gangle stated.

“I just had a person on it, nothing more,” Ragatha added for consideration.

“A cute little elephant!” Kinger said.

“Oh… I… I think I see where this is going…” Pomni replied hesitantly, “The animals represent the mods… Like for Kinger, he seems to grow, and elephants are some of the largest animals. Gorillas are known to be aggressive, right?”

“How does a cow relate to me? I don’t feel like… whatever a cow feels like.” Zooble noted.

“It wasn’t a cow, doll, it was a frickin’ bull. Just look at those guns you’re developing,” Gangle’s new, somehow unhinged self commented.

Zooble looked at their arms.
They were, indeed, more swole.

“Oh. Hey. I don’t hate that.”

“But what about me? I just had a person on it, no animal,” Ragatha said thoughtfully, while putting her fingers on her mouth.

Wait… Fingers?
Several?
All five of them, unlike usual?

Pomni’s brain connected the dots.

“Y-you had a human! Humans are animals, too! Look at your hand, Ragatha!” Pomni exclaimed.

Ragatha did so, staring at them in confusion. It seemed like she had forgotten that she once had a completely normal human body.

“Y-you’re right, wow…! I… this is… wow. Do I… change into my normal self, now? Or … any kind of human? Oh-- oh god, will I turn into an old, bald man?”

“C-calm down, I don’t think so, I mean… Your hands already look so nice and delicate, don’t they?” Pomni said and only noticed afterwards that she had used her flirty voice.

Hopefully Ragatha hasn’t noticed.

“What did you have, Pomni? A pig?” Gangle interrupted this slight discomfort by being even more uncomfortable.

Everyone stared at her again.

“You *definitely* are a bit unpleasant,” Zooble called her out.

“I don’t fucking care,” Gangle gave back. “I’m just saying what everyone thinks. Pomni has grown a gut.”

"R-rude," Pomni said as she tried to hide her swollen belly, believing that nobody would notice it. While doing so, she could feel that it had grown. “I… I didn’t have a pig. I had a weird, long bird.”

“A stork.” Kinger revealed.

Pomni stared at him.

“W-wait ….. n-no…….”

“Congratulations!” Kinger added.

Pomni staggered backwards, against the sofa, and fell on it. “No…”

Gangle laughed, but Zooble and Ragatha came close. Ragatha sat next to her, looking at her with a now more human-resembling eye, while Zooble took her hand.

“This… this is all kinds of disturbing….” Pomni began.

“Oh, no, Pomni…! I think it looks very cute,” Ragatha tried to calm her down.

“You could have it worse. You could turn into Jax,” Zooble noted.

ROSE VIRAGE

“Wait, Jax… We should tell him what we found out.” Pomni said.

Gangle made a dismissive movement with one of her ribbon arms. “Fuck him! You heard that dickhole. He wants to roll up into a ball in a corner and cry.”

“I’m with … Mrs. Hyde on this one. What’s the harm in letting him figure it out himself?” Zooble agreed.

Something inside Pomni wanted to go to bat for Jax, but a bigger part wanted him to struggle and her to focus on herself and the people who actually showed that they cared for her.

“Okay… t-then… what did Caine say…? That the solution is somewhere in the circus? Like… the thing that will un-mod us?”

“I think so,” Zooble said.

“So…” Ragatha acknowledged slowly, “…we all want… to go back? To undo this change?”

Pomni grabbed her—now five-fingered—hand, fearful about where Ragatha was going with her objection.

Ragatha looked at her. Then she squeezed Pomni's hand.

“No, of course. Not all of us are happy with what’s going on,” she noted, with a hint of sadness in her voice.

“Besides, if we find… whatever we are supposed to find, maybe we can decide if or when we want to turn things back to normal again,” Zooble pointed out.

“So, what are we waiting for, bitches? Let’s fucking split up and end this acid trip!” Gangle yelled. There now was clearly another, new mask under her sad mask. Concerning.

Pomni got up again. “O-okay. Let’s do that and meet again in an hour here.”

With that, they all split up.

Pomni knew she actually should immediately start searching.

But there was no way in hell that she wouldn't find a mirror first. She had to see what the others saw. She had to see how much had changed.

So before deciding on anything else, she straight up walked towards her room. It didn't just have a mirror, but also privacy, which was desired for potential face derailments and meltdowns.

When she entered her room, it took her a good minute to finally turn towards the mirror.

But once she did, she immediately regretted her decision.
She wasn't ready to see that f[redacted]d-uped mod's consequences.

She let out a stressed moan and nervously touched the swollen curve with shaking hands.

It was definitely bigger now. *Way* bigger.
Her cartoon proportions made it hard to guess, but if she had to make one, she'd compare it to 5 months along. Maybe more.

She definitely wasn't ready to see herself like this. Not again. Even when it was just a 3D cartoon rendering of her formal self.

"W-why..." Pomni asked herself out loud. It included several 'whys': Why now? Why and how did Bubble come up with this s[redacted]t? And why... *her*?

Was this curse random? Or was it specifically designed for them?

She thought about it.
Zooble struggled with their appearance. Maybe they wanted to look more manly in the past? And Gangle also had issues with speaking up... it would fit for them. With Kinger... she didn't know. Maybe he had some high positions in the past? And what about Ragatha? Did she... was it possible that she didn't feel human in the past...?

Those were all assumptions, but they didn't seem too off.
But maybe this was just a guessing game, as with astrology. Everyone could fit in most signs if they wanted to.

But even if so... The mod Pomni had gotten was terrifyingly uncanny.

A sudden, sharp pain.
A strange noise, like stomach rumbling.

Pomni clutched her swollen middle and moaned again.

She could feel the belly grow under her hands, and this time, *it hurt*.

What in the actual f[redacted]k was going on? How far would that go? What's even inside? Was there something inside, or was it just a visual change? And why, in God's name, did this hurt so much?

She could feel the fears and terror from her former life crawling into the corners of her mind, manifesting like tentacles that gripped her heart, brain, and sanity.

Her body was invaded again. Again, she had no say in this. Again, she was forced to have her appearance altered and her body to be shared against her will. It was only a matter of time before the others would start to dictate stuff. How she had to behave, how she should feel. How awful she would be for hating what was happening to her. How cruel. How selfish. How careless.

And when they were done judging, assuming, labeling, shaming—they would leave her. Alone. In this deep pit of despair and self-hatred. And even when the… consequence of her action was there and taken care of by capable and loving people, even when she was working as hard as she could to send money every month, to provide a good future—it wouldn't be enough.
They wouldn't come back.
They would judge from afar.
And she was left alone.

There was no escaping this despair. One dumb, tiny mistake. And it would follow her everywhere, even here.
The reason she had agreed to using this headset in the first place, to escape the cruel reality—it now was torturing her.
It was all a big, fat joke.
She truly was a clown.

"Pomni!" somebody behind her called out.

Only now did Pomni notice that she had been crying loudly, in pure agony, fallen on her knees, her face hidden under her hands.

"Hey, Poms… c'mon …. you're scaring me, s-stop crying…"

It was Jax.

He sounded angry, yes—but there was something else.
It didn't sound particularly as if he had come over to comfort her. More as if he was terrified of something and desperately wanted it to stop.

"D-don't look at me…!" Pomni screamed into her hands, muffled, turning her body away from him so that he couldn't see her swollen shape. "Please!"

Jax didn't answer at first.

Then, the lights went out, and she heard the door close.

She thought—partially relieved, partially with a heavy heart—that he had just left her like this.
But then he started to talk again, revealing that he was now in the room with her.

“Kay. That's alright with me, because I don't want you to see me either.”

Pomni finally stopped sobbing and lifted her head, looking into darkness. One that wasn’t of physical nature but the absence of code and rendering. Digital darkness.

That’s right... Jax was also suffering from the mod. He probably was also going through something. And by the sound of it, it wasn’t pleasurable.

She wasn’t all alone in this. At least in a way.

“Fine ... I s-stopped crying,” Pomni assured him, “you can go now.”

“I don’t think I can.”

“Why?”

“Because...” Jax began, but then paused. Then he added pragmatically, “Reasons.”

Pomni made a sound. It was meant to resemble annoyance, but it appeared more hurt than anything.

“I don’t want you to be here,” she said.

Jax responded with a sound himself, one of a very derogatory nature. “Oh, boo-hoo. You think I want to be here?”

“...Yes?”

“No, dumbo.”

“Then...” Pomni began, “...Why are you?”

“I feel that... staying is the lesser evil.”

“That’s both cryptic and cruel, Jax.”

Jax moaned, and she could hear him come closer in the dark. “F[redacted]k Pomni! F[redacted]g take a hint. You were screaming as if you were dying. What else was I supposed to do? Record it and make it my alarm clock?”

She had been screaming...?

Another sharp pain.

Another sharp cut into her poorly covered-up memory. The hurt seeped out like oil. She clutched her belly again, and it now felt alarmingly big.

This time she noticed that she was, indeed, screaming.

“F[redacted]k, Pomni!” she heard Jax say, and suddenly he was right next to her, grabbing her by the shoulders, “What is going on with you??”

“I don’t want this!” Pomni screamed out with all the despair that had accumulated over the past 10 years. “I can’t do this again!”

She knew these words to be true.
Going through this again? It would cut the last strings that were keeping her sanity, that were keeping her alive.

“I don’t understand what you’re saying!” Jax replied, and he now yelled, too. There was sheer panic in his voice. “Are you ---- are you, f[redacted]k! Are you … about to----”

The sane part of Pomni's brain at last understood what he was hinting at and had been terrified about.

“No!” she answered and grabbed his hand. She wanted to comfort him in some sort of way, even though his concern might not have been about her personally, but about going through another abstraction again.

But this sudden touch made her crave receiving comfort, too, and she ended up clinging onto him.

“I mean… I’m not sure…! It’s … ohgod, please, stay. For just a moment. Please, don’t leave me alone. Please.”

He didn’t answer, but after some panicked breaths, she felt his hands around her shoulders.

“T… thank you…” Pomni whimpered, sobbing, clinging onto him like she was drowning.

After some moments, the pain in her abdomen faded, and with it, the boiling terrors.

Jax must’ve felt something, because he eventually asked: “You … wanna talk about it…?”

Pomni thought about it, panting, trying to recover from those unwanted feelings.

Of course, this here was different. Of course there wouldn't be a real consequence. Of course this had nothing to do with real life.

Her meltdown suddenly felt dumb.

"N... no. But..." she began, "I want to show you about it."

"That's not even correct Eng—" he began jokingly but stopped when she grabbed his hand and put it on her belly.

He immediately went silent. Then, he said: "Oh..."

Pomni wasn't sure whether he would understand or not. But he was more empathetic than he was willing to admit, so he could probably put together some of the puzzle pieces. Whatever went through his head, he didn't share it, and Pomni didn't dare to ask.

But as she let go of his arm, his hand didn't retreat, as she thought it would. He didn't break a stupid joke. He just kept it there, with his fingers eventually brushing over it, gently feeling it up.

It felt... it felt nice.

Was this how it was supposed to feel?

"You feel like... really far along?"

"Yeah..." Pomni agreed.

"This really is f[redacted]d up. What even is inside?"

"I... I don't know. I really, *really* hope it's not any kind of NPC. I hope it's just... nothing."

"Do you feel something inside?"

"Not... not really. It just hurts. And it's heavy."

ROSE VIRAGE

“What… do you want to do?”

Pomni hesitated. Then she leaned close to him again.
He somehow felt… softer than usual.
What was his mod?

“I have no idea. It’s… growing so fast. I want it gone, but at the same time… *if* there’s something inside, I’m not sure… you know. I… I think I would want to know first.”

Jax didn’t answer. God knows what was going on inside his head.

“Where is everyone? Why are you alone?” he eventually said.

“Looking for *the thing* Caine mentioned. To undo what’s going on with us. I was just… dumb and wanted to look in the mirror.”

“Can’t blame ya. If I’d were you, I’d also check myself out in the mirror, rocking that m[redacted]f body.”

Pomni stared at him, deranged. Or at least at the darkness where she suspected his face to be.

“Are you serious?” she asked.

“Sorry, sorry. Pregnant people are kinda hot tho, just sayin’”

Pomni had no idea if he truly meant it, was trying to cheer her up, or was trying to torture her.
She decided to simply not care about it right now.

“In… in any case, I… I need to go looking for it. Will you help me?”

She heard his clothes shuffle, then he got up.

“Alright,” he said, “but only because I want to see you struggle moving around with this tiny sphere of a body.”

She moaned, but to her own relief she noticed that this sound was more on the rhetorical side. It didn’t actually hurt her, unlike Gangle’s pig comment before. On the contrary, even. It felt affectionate, in a way.

“Oh, before I turn on the light … Promise you won’t laugh. Or I punch you. Regardless of your false state.”

Now Pomni was more than curious. “I promise,” she said.

When Jax turned up the light switch, Pomni didn’t see any change at first. Except for that strange feeling that he seemed somewhat prettier and more appealing.

They both looked at each other. She goggled him up and down, looking for whatever should make her theoretically laugh, while he was staring at her heavy middle, which was now surely resembling a 7th or 8th-month pregnancy.

His comment from earlier, about him liking pregnant women, seemed to have at least a grain of truth to it. Or maybe Pomni was imagining things again.

As she observed his face, she finally noticed the changes. She also knew why she hadn’t noticed them until now. Simply because she had seen him similar to this before, and because it somehow looked natural on him.

He had lashes. Or maybe a cartoonish version of a sharp eyeliner.

But not only that, now that she knew where to look, she noticed that his whole face seemed softer. That his ears were shorter. And even though it was subtle, his linear body now had an ever-so-slight waist.

Then, Jax' expression suddenly changed. As if he remembered that he actually was a smug d[redacted]head. His eyes finally looked up to Pomni’s, and he bestowed on her his trademark grin again.

“What? No dumb comments? No laughs?” he dared her.

“I promised I wouldn’t laugh. Also, I’m… not really in the position to make fun of you.”

His expression changed slightly again. Was it concern? Sorrow? For her, or for her not making fun of him? Did he actually *want* her to comment on it further?

“Yeah, not arguing with that,” he then said.

“So… your mod slowly turns you into a woman?”

He frowned. “Mod? That’s what this is? Sheesh. I’ve been here for god knows how long, and Caine still finds new dumb ways to surprise me,” he answered, ignoring her actual question at first. But then he added, “Also, no. It slowly changes my body, not me.”

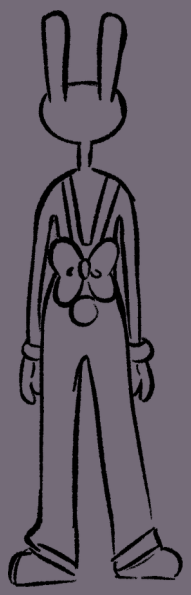
This made Pomni forget about her own struggle for a moment. As a queer person with a queer community, she was well aware that the body didn't always represent the mind, but she hadn't taken Jax as somebody who understood the subtle but important difference and, furthermore, put emphasis on it. He also used the words "changing the body" instead of "turning the body female", which sounded pretty advanced in gender studies. But, as always, it also might've just been a coincidence.

Before she could pursue this any further, though, he turned around and left her room. "Let's go looking for that goddamn *thing* Caine has been so ominous about."

She followed him, and much to her demise, walking *really* wasn't that easy anymore.
He seemed to notice, because he slowed down a little.

Then she spotted another change in his appearance.
A rather big one, this time.

There was a bow on the back of his overalls, right where the suspenders met the pants.
An actual, big, puffy bow, in the same salmon color as his clothes.



"Are you ... are you aware of..."

"Yes." he interrupted her, moderately annoyed.

Pomni couldn't help but stare.

"Take a picture, it'll last longer," Jax commented, even though she walked behind him, out of his view.

"Did you change your clothes?" Pomni poked further, carefully.

He turned around. "No! As if we could just... do that! It just grew there, like a dumb, bow-shaped tumor."

"I guess whoever made the mod wanted to make sure the changes were more obvious, since you don't look that different. I mean, everyone knows that cartoon animal boys look normal, while girls always are just variations with extra lashes and bows."

As she spoke, Pomni was grateful that this stupid, illogical gender dimorphism at least wasn't a thing here in the circus.

"That's not funny, jester. Shouldn't you focus on other things right now? Like, where we should look?"

“I have no idea. Everywhere, I guess? We probably should look inside some of the doors. Even though I’m not looking forward to it. Some of the stuff inside there is… urgh. Stuff I’d want to unsee.”

And so they did. They opened up every door they came across, scanning the rooms for something that looked like a quest marker or glowing important objects, and checking behind big decorative assets.

After a good while of silence, Pomni said, “You know… I… I think these mods are somehow connected to us specifically.”

“You don’t say,” Jax commented nonchalantly, but then stopped and looked at her with wide-open eyes. She could almost see the gears shifting in his head. Whether he was thinking about what his quick answer revealed about him or wondering about Pomni’s mod background, she couldn’t say.

She decided not to pursue it any further.
But also to look at him again.

He really did look cute like that. Even though the changes were subtle.

For this, she decided to speak up.

“You look cute like that.”

“I know,” he answered, somewhat bored, while opening another door and looking inside the room behind it. “I’m adorable.”

“I’m not sure if you’re being sarcastic, but… yes, actually.”

He closed the door and turned around, the smug grin on his face previewing what he was about to say.

“Awww, are you flirting again? Are you a little lesbian, hm? A little girl on girl loving ‘bean?”

Pomni didn’t answer.His grin slowly vanished.

“Wait, are you?”

“Mostly,” she eventually answered.

He came closer. “But—I thought… I mean. I thought you… the other day, didn’t you try to … no, wait. What about that stupid gummy guy?”

ROSE VIRAGE

“I said ‘mostly,’” Pomni repeated herself without further explanation, trying to keep her distance emotionally. But maybe also teasing him a little.

He just stared at her.
Then his eyes slowly drifted down her torso again.

This time she decided to say something. “My eyes are up here,” she taunted with a cheeky smirk.

He looked up again, and her banter finally seemed to get to him, because for a moment, he looked genuinely embarrassed.

“Also, this thing has nothing to do with my sexual attraction.”

“Right,” he commented unironically and turned around again, maybe to not have to look at her. “Sorry for questioning.”

His wording, his mod… Furthermore, now thinking about it—his reaction when he was voted into a maid dress in one of the last adventures..

This made Pomni rethink her previous statement.

“I’m… sorry, too. I just shouldn’t have called you cute. Or at least… not call how you look right now cute.”

He slowly turned around again, looking at her. As if she had said something wrong.

“What do you mean?” he asked, menacingly.

“I… w-what? Sorry, did I say something hurtful?”

He came closer, looking angry now. “Oh no, don’t come at me with this snowflake b[redacted]t. Why are you suddenly apologizing?!”

“S-sorry, I didn’t mean---- I mean, I take it back! You look cute, sheesh!”

“Oh no. No, no. What kind of headcanons are you weaving about me in your head again? Why are you suddenly so weirdly considerate? Will you ask me about my pronouns next? About my triggers? About who I truly am?!”

She grabbed his hand with both of hers. He tried to pull back, but she held on tight.

“PLEASE!”, she yelled, finally making him stop in his tracks. Tears were forming in her eyes, dropping down in comically huge orbs. She hated herself for crying, but her body reacted this intensely on its own.

“Please…!” she repeated. “Not again. Not now. I… I can’t take this right now.”

He didn’t answer, but she noticed how his breathing decelerated.

“You can … you can yell at me all you want when this is over. You can yell at me as loudly as you want, saying that I’m nothing more than a pastime for you to toy with. It’s okay. But… but not now. I’m not much in control right now. I’m not myself.”

She could feel how he stopped trying to pull back.

That already helped her to calm down again. However, part of her still wanted to hug him tightly, to be embraced by him, and for him not to leave her side. Not in this goddamn situation, in this f[redacted]d-up state.

She didn’t want these feelings.
It made her feel weak and helpless.

“Neither am I,” he eventually stated. Cryptically, somehow. As if there was more to it. But Pomni was too weak to look into it further.

“We… we should go back to the lounge, I think… We agreed to all meet again there.” She tried to reason, hoping to get away from this situation.

“Then do that.”

“Please come with me.”
She grabbed his hand harder again.

“And let the others see me like that?”

“I don’t think they will notice… and… you also get to see everyone else *like that*.”

He pondered. “True. That’s a great argument. It’ll probably create some nice new nicknames, too.”

When they arrived at the lounge, everyone else was there already.

Gangle looked the least changed, though her sad mask seemed to have been broken, now replaced with a smugly grinning Chad-like face.

Next to her was Zooble, with arms as big as trunks. They looked like they had popped off the arms from a He-Man action figure, painted them colorfully, and put them on themself.

Ragatha now looked fully human. Her proportions were pleasantly curvy, her hair was still red, but now naturally curly in a very cute way, she had peachy, full lips, and the space in her face where usually a button was sewn on was now replaced by a normal second eye.

The most notable transformation was evident in Kinger; initially, Pomni mistook him for a massive background object, until he began to move. He was now half the height of the circus.

Ragatha was the first to notice Pomni and Jax. She looked up, and upon seeing Pomni, her cheeks flushed in a soft red.

Gangle was the next to see. And unfortunately, also to comment.

“Holy cow, Pomni is knocked up to the brim!” she said, while making weird gestures with her hands as if she grew up on the streets.

“What the f[redacted]k is wrong with her?” Jax said, half grinning, half confused.

“She’s... unhinged now,” Pomni answered more silently to Jax, then a bit louder for the group to hear, “I would prefer if you’d all just... ignore that for now.”

Gangle laughed. “Ignore that you look like you’re about to pop? How are we supposed to do that, when you are mostly belly with a bit of Pomni attached?”

Zooble put their (big, very masculine) hand on Gangle's shoulder to shut her up. Gangle immediately started to kiss Zooble's muscles. It was not just somewhat unhinged. It was advanced unhinged.

“You know, she kinda got a point,” Jax commented while they both got closer to the group. “And as I said, pregnancy is ---”

“Yeah yeah, I know,” Pomni interrupted him, but felt her face growing hot.

“And apparently I’m not the only one who thinks so,” he added, pointing at something.

Pomni followed the direction his hand was pointing at and saw the now almost uncanny humanly, but pretty, Ragatha, still looking at her with wide eyes and flushed cheeks.

“A-anyway… did any of you find *the thing*?” Pomni deflected and turned her attention towards the others, her face still burning.

Disheartened rumbling from all members.

“Great, haha,” Pomni answered nervously. “That’s not disturbing at all!”

“Oh look! Pomni’s pregnant!” Kinger's remark was puzzling because, despite his size, his voice sounded completely the same and even appeared to come from the same rough spot where he would typically be standing.

Thankfully, this time everyone ignored him.

“Well, there’s a silver lining, I think,” Ragatha then said, “I’m not sure how tall Kinger can grow, but I’m at least as… human as I can be, I think? And Pomni seems to be also as… far along as possible? So things can’t get worse, right?”

“I also think that Gangle can’t get any more deranged,” Zooble commented, and when Pomni looked at them, she saw that Gangle was now fully wrapped around Zooble’s arm, rubbing her weird Chad mask onto it.

“Right…” Pomni said, trying to calm down the anxiety that was simmering just below the surface.

“Okay, so I suggest we go looking again. Maybe Caine has given us some hints in what he said? Do any of you remember it?” Ragatha said helpfully and turned towards the others again.

Then something happened.

Pomni considered it to be a weird glitch or distortion or something at first, but it happened again.

Something was shifting inside her.

Panicked and without thinking, she grabbed Jax’ hand, who was still standing beside her in a rather bored manner.
He didn’t hold her hand, but he also didn’t pull it away. However, he immediately looked alarmed.

She looked up to him, feeling her world shifting again, feeling another flashback resurfacing, but also the sheer dread of the implications of this sensation.

He just stared at her and didn’t ask, maybe unsure about how much they could speak about here.

“I felt something move,” she whispered. There was almost no tone in her voice, but he understood her anyway.

This made him look even more alarmed. “F[redacted]k”, he simply answered.

As both stood there, staring at each other, Pomni started to hyperventilate.

“Jax ... no ... I can’t do this--- I don’t----- No, I don’t want there to be *something*----”

“Calm down,” he responded in a surprisingly soft tone.

“No, please ... I---- No....” Pomni continued, and by now her voice was loud enough to draw everyone's attention.

What eventually distressed them wasn’t Pomni panicking—it probably was more so the fact that she was holding Jax’ hand that gave away that something really bad was happening to her.

“Pomni...?” Kinger was the first to address her.

Another sharp pain.

A different one, this time. One she already knew. One she dreaded. One she never wanted to experience ever again.

ROSE VIRAGE

Then a splash.

“nononononoNONONO----” Pomni began, but the pain within her drew her to her knees, right into the puddle under her, while she was clutching her heavy middle with all of her strength.

“HolY SHIT is this really happening now?!” Gangle screamed out everyone's thoughts, and despite her new, rough nature, she untangled herself from Zooble and was right next to Pomni in an instant.

“Please!!” Pomni screamed out, without actually knowing what she was begging for. Was it for Caine to end this purgatory? The pain to stop? The others to stay away and not touch her? Or actually come closer? Or, maybe, eventually, it was a plea to herself, to not shatter into a thousand pieces.

But...

What if she did?

What if she just... gave in?

If she’d break, it would be over. All of this. She wouldn’t have to go through with what was happening to her. She would escape this situation. The possibly horrible consequence. The worries of her past life. The nagging fear. The circus.

She would be free.

That was all she wanted, right?

Someone was laughing.

She caught herself feeling somewhat offended about this, until she noticed that it was herself.

And why wouldn’t she?

This was it.
The end.
The most ironic, most agonizing, and funniest thing that could’ve happened to her.

Her pleas for help and her screams of pain now fully turned into a wholehearted laugh.
And it felt. so. good.

Then, suddenly, another sharp pain. This time it was nowhere near her nether regions, but in her face.

A burning sensation in her cheek followed it up.

“Did Jax just hit a pregnant woman?” Zooble commented in disbelief.

“STOP THIS S[redacted]T!” Pomni heard Jax scream. ”DON’T GO THERE!”

She went silent.

And the world around her started to clear up again, into solid shapes and colors, not vague shapes and agonizing thoughts.

Now she noticed that everyone was close to her. They were all touching her, brushing over her hands, looking at her with worried faces. She even noticed Kinger, or at least his giant hand, right behind her, supporting her back.

Jax was kneeling beside her, still holding her hand. Something about her must’ve frightened him, because he looked absolutely terrified.

They were all here. All of them.

This time, she wasn’t alone.

Their support and care shone through them, begging her to stay, begging her to fight.

She could do this. She would. She would.

But what exactly would she need to do?

This wasn’t her human body. It didn’t have the parts needed for … whatever wanted to get out. Where did the ammoniac fluid even come from?

“Pomni, please, relax, it’s all good! Please remember the pain isn’t real!” She heard Ragatha try to calm her down.

“We will find a way to get this out of you,” Zooble added, showing that they had the same concerns that Pomni did.

“Even if we rip that fucker out of you, bitch!” Gangle affirmed.

It was a horrific thought, and she would not want that, but something about it felt healing to Pomni. Not that she would ever dare to think that derogatory about a real fetus, but in its own, backwards way, it indicated that Gangle actually cared more about Pomni than the thing inside she hasn’t even consented to. This felt comforting.

ROSE VIRAGE

She felt another contraction, and this time, she finally decided to follow up on her instinct and actually push. Regardless of whether it made sense or not.

Her hands grabbed onto whoever was holding hers, she laid her head back, and moaned in misery while she did her best to give into the pain and push.

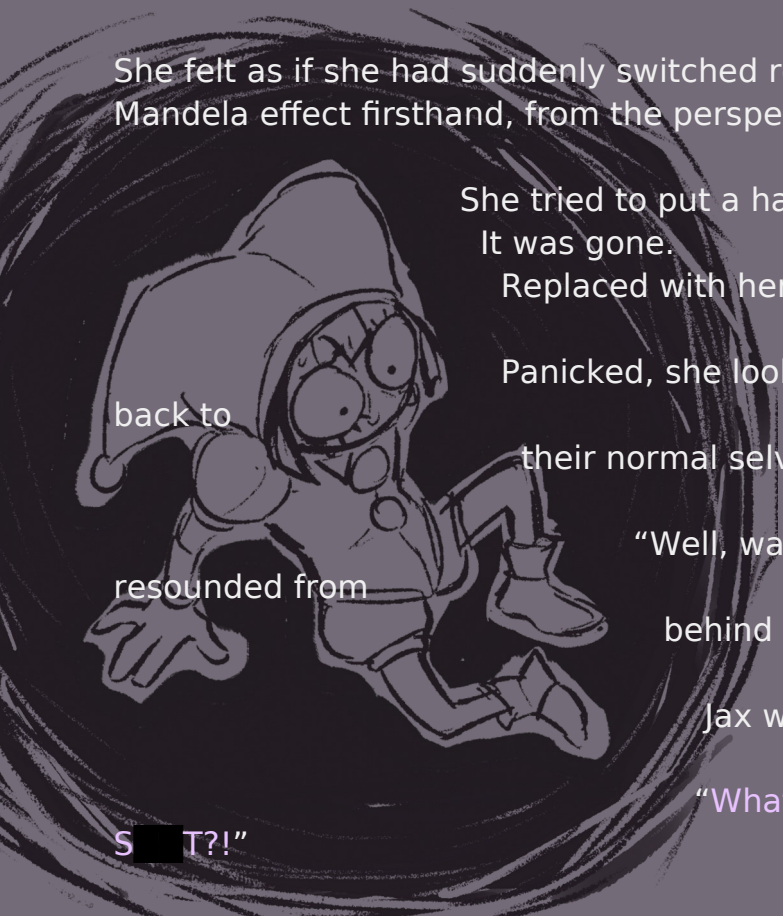
Some mass inside her did move deeper down, and then ----

It suddenly stopped.

All of it.

The contractions. The pain. The pressure. Just the heavy breathing remained.

Even the giant hand behind her had vanished.
Without the support, she fell back, only catching her weight with one arm.



She felt as if she had suddenly switched realities. As if she had just witnessed the Mandela effect firsthand, from the perspective of the reality changing subject.

She tried to put a hand on her belly.

It was gone.

Replaced with her usual, small, flat self.

Panicked, she looked up and saw that everyone else was back to their normal selves, too. Even the puddle was gone.

“Well, wasn’t that a DOOZY!” Caine's voice resounded from behind them, hauntingly cheerful.

Jax was instantly on his feet.

“What the F[redacted]K was that, you dental piece of S[redacted]T?!”

“Why, your most exciting adventure yet!”

Gangle also got up. “Caine ... that... that really was cruel,” she scolded him. She was back to her regular, softspoken self, wearing her sad mask, but some of the fighting spirit of her feistiness still seemed to be within her.

“No, really, Caine. That was... holy s[redacted]t.” Zooble added.

“I think you all forgot how to properly use the word ‘phenomenal’! I mean, wasn’t it life-changing? Mind-bending? Utterly healing?”

“Healing!? Are you out of your mind, you artificial imbecility!? Try traumatizing!” Zooble talked back. “We couldn’t even escape this nightmare, because there was no actual solution somewhere in this circus, as you said!”

Caine scratches the upper part of his gums. It seemed as though he was contemplating some simple, puzzling thoughts. Not as if he was actually being accused of abuse.

“We might be misunderstanding each other. Are you folks not the closest you have ever been? Haven’t you been able to overcome some qualms? Making some warm memories? That was all this adventure had been about! And the solution *was* inside this circus! It was within *you*!”

Zooble moaned as if they were in actual pain. Kinger helped Pomni get back on her feet. She barely noticed it. Jax panted in fury. Ragatha also looked as if she was dissociating. She whispered, “That... doesn’t even make sense...”

ROSE VIRAGE

Pomni, again, stroked over her normal, completely flat abdomen.

“Caine …” she finally managed to say, her voice as fragile as an autumn leaf. “Where… where did it go…?”

“What is this ‘*it*’ you’re talking about, my dear?”

Almost on its own, Pomni’s hand kept brushing over her body, as if there was something to find that she maybe had been overlooking.

“It. The… the thing. The b… whatever was inside me.”

Caine tapped his chin with his walking stick, making a pondering expression. “Oh, right. Well, what do you want it to be? I can give you that. As long as it’s a broiler or something like that, not an NPC obviously.”

“N-no, Caine. It’s not what I want. I want to know what was actually inside.” Pomni pushed further, her fingers now shaking.

“Why, nothing!”

Jax stomped so hard on the ground, it shook. “Stop mindf[redacted]g her! There was *SOMETHING*, Pomni did feel something move!”

“Oh, that!” Caine responded, “Yeah no, there was nothing.”

With that, Jax lost it. He jumped at him, his hands reaching out to choke him.

Alarmingly quickly, as if he had seen it coming, Caine snapped, and Jax vanished mid-air.

“Nono, we can’t have this sort of violence! Against me, I mean. A week of anger management jail for you again, Jax. Now, where were we? Oh, right! Congratulations, you did so well, my brilliant little featherless snails!”

Pomni stared at the fixed point in the air where Jax had just disappeared.

Everyone went silent.

Pomni felt, once again, tears rising up and silently dripping down her face. She should be happy that there was no actual consequence. She didn’t understand where the tears came from. Nor did she want to, right now.

ROSE VIRAGE

“You used to be an epiphany. But you developed into a monster, Caine,” Kinger said, while gently putting a hand on Pomni’s shoulder and guiding her with gentle force towards her room.

“Just … leave,” Zooble advised him, then followed them.
Ragatha and Gangle also followed, silently walking close to Pomni, leaving Caine behind.

Pomni didn’t know how Caine reacted to that, but he didn’t respond, nor did he follow them. Much to her relief.

She felt Ragatha grabbing her hand.

“You… you did great, Pomni,” she said. It sounded honest, not like an empty phrase.

“Yeah…” Zooble agreed, “Ragatha is right. This was all kinds of f[redacted]d up. And no matter what you are feeling right now, everything is valid.”

“Even… if you have conflicting feelings, Pomni…” Gangle reinforced Zooble’s conclusion.

“Th… thank you, guys. That’s … that’s actually very helpful.” Pomni answered gratefully.

“I just hope Jax doesn’t break the code of the anger management room again,” Kinger considered. “Or be sad.”

“He’ll manage. He always does,” Ragatha reassured him, also soothing Pomnis concerns in the progress.

“Uhm…” Pomni began, swiping away her tears, trying to focus on something else beside the hell she just had been through, “…Is that… like… normal? That Caine did that?”

“Not that often, but… yeah. It’s a thing he does if any of us try to harm him.” Zooble said. “Jax knew that. So don’t feel too bad for him. He knew what he was getting himself into.”

They silently walked down the hallway to their rooms.

“Gotta say, though,” Zooble then added, “His mod definitely was the cutest one.”

The others all gave an agreeing mumble, revealing that all of them had taken note of it, but not teasing him for it.

Pomni couldn’t help but smile.

With them around, she might be able to stay sane.